

# THE REHEARSAL.

1. All Constitutions, as well in Church as State, have vary'd in their Frames; yet this Alters not the Species of Government, nor Breaks the Succession. This shew'd in the High-Priesthood among the Jews. The Succession of our Bishops shew'd as of other Ancient Churches. *Tertullian* appeals to the Succession against the Hereticks and We against the Dissenters.
2. Episcopal Churches in Europe (besides Rome) before the Reformation. And since, besides England.
3. An Episcopal Protestant Church in Poland.
4. Episcopal Churches in Asia.
5. In Africa.
6. Of our Plantations in America.

SATURDAY, November 29. 1707.

(1.) Country-man.

What do you think, Master, of the Answer I gave

last time to that Distinction of the Dissenters, of Bishops, and the Sort of Bishops?

*Rehearsal.* Your Answer was Good Country-man. For that Distinction, as they Drive it, wou'd Dissolve all the Churches, all the Governments, all the Families in the World. For which of these have not vary'd more or less, in long tract of time, from their first Institution? And the Consequence the Dissenters wou'd Draw from this, is an Utter Dissolution of all these. Because we have not (as they say) such Sort of Bishops as in the Primitive Ages, therefor they will have None at all! How Precarious was the High-Priesthood in our Saviour's time from what it was in its first Institution? Did our Saviour therefore plead that ther was no High-Priest then? And because the Scribes and Pharisees (then a Generation of Vipers) sat in Moses Seat, did he therefor Dissolve our Obedience to them? No. But for that Reason, He Confirm'd their Authority, and Requir'd His Disciples as well as the other Jews to Obey them in all whatsoever they Commanded. And tho' He was Silent before Herod and Pontius Pilate, yet when the High-Priest Adjur'd Him, He freely Declar'd Himself to be the Son of God. And St. Paul apply'd to the High-Priest that Text, *Thou shalt not Revile the Gods*. Yet it might have been said of him, that he was not like Aaron, and that the Priesthood had Diviated much since that time. But they sat in Moses Seat, the Succession was Deduc'd in them

in the Ordinary way. And is it not so with our Bishops? Have they not Succeeded the Primitive Bishops, and sit in their Seat? And have we not the Names of our Bishops, and their Succession, as of our Kings? Look but into *Stow* his Survey of London, a Book common among our Citizens, and there you will see the several Bishops of London, as far up as our Histories reach. And so it is of the Rest. And where the Records have been preserv'd we have all their Names up to the very Apostles, as in the Great Sees of Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome, Alexandria, &c. Nay no further off than Lyons in France, we know that St. Irenaeus was Bishop there who was Disciple to St. Polycarp, who was Disciple to St. John the Apostle, and made Bishop of Smyrna by him; and St. Ignatius another Disciple of St. John's, and who had been conversant with the other Apostles, was Bishop of Antioch. So that the Succession of Bishops goes up to the very Fountain. St. Jerom says (*ad Evagr.*) that in Alexandria the Succession of their Bishops was clear from St. Mark the Evangelist to Heraclas and Dionysius who were Bishops in his time. And *Tertullian* (*de Praescrip.*) says it was so in all other Churches, and Reckons up several of them, Founded by the Apostles themselves, as at Corinth, Philippi, Ephesus, Thessalonica, &c. And appeals to the Succession of their Bishops from the Apostles, against the Hereticks whom he Provokes, to shew the Succession of their Bishops, that we may know (says he) whether your first Bishop was Ordain'd by any of the Apostles, or of those Apostolical Men who Ad-

heard

hear'd to the *Apostles*, and Persever'd with them, and whom you Acknowledge for the Author and Founder of your Churches.

Country-m. This is the very Question you ask of our Dissenters. Let the Presbyterians shew who was the first *Presbyter* or *Bishop* (call him what they will) from whom they Derive their Succession, and who Founded the first *Presbyterian Church*.

(2.) But, Master, the Eighth Answer which the *Observer* we were last upon, Num. 16. gives to your Question is, I desire him to shew us an *Episcopal Church* before the Reformation, except the Roman, or once since, besides the English.

Rehears. I suppose it shou'd be or one since, besides the English. And has he never heard of Denmark and Sweden, and that they have Bishops there, ever since the Reformation? Besides Scotland, where Episcopacy grieves them still, set up by the first Protestant King. But before the Reformation he thinks ther was no *Episcopal Church*, except the Roman. What were all the other Churches in the World then? Were they *Presbyterian*, or Independent, *Anabaptists*, or *Quakers*? It is strange that among all these he cou'd not find one *Presbyterian Church*, for a Precedent to *Calvin*! But we'll Travel round the Globe with him, and see if we can find one. And to begin at Europe, there is the Great Empire of *Russia*, which is in Extent, a third Part of Europe at least, and a Christian Church, long before the Reformation, and which never own'd the Supremacy of Rome, nor do's to this Day. But (alafs!) they are far from being *Presbyterians*, they are full of Bishops, and ever were. They were part of the Greek Church, and under the Patriarch of *Constantinople*, till it was Conquer'd by the Turk, and then they set up a Patriarch of their own. Thus much for Europe.

(3.) Let me here only tell, That ther is a Protestant Church in Poland, which has preserv'd a Succession of Bishops to this Day ever since the Reformation. I mention this, only to shew those who plead Necessity, That Protestants of equal Zeal might have kept up Episcopacy tho' in Popish Countries. They send further for Traffick, than they need for Bishops.

(4.) Country-m. Now, Master, let us go into Asia, are ther no Christians there? And have they any Bishops?

Rehears. Ther are more Christians there, Country-man, than in Europe. There is the greatest part of the once Famous Greek Church, the Armenians, the Georgians, the Mingrellians, and further towards the East the Jacobites, and Christians of St. Thomas, with many others of different Denominations. I have read of a Cardinal of Rome,

who giving an Account of these, said ther were greater Numbers of one Denomination there, than all in the Communion of Rome. And all these and every one of them are Episcopal, and ever have been. They have Bishops, Arch-Bishops, and Patriarchs of their own, who pay no Subjection to the See of Rome. And, in that Sense, may be call'd Protestants too.

(5.) Now pass me into Africa, where was the great Patriarchat of Alexandria, in Egypt, where the greater Athanasius was Bishop. And in the same Country, St. Cyprian was Arch-Bishop of Carthage, St. Augustine was Bishop of Hippo, and ther were many other Eminent Bishops there. Ther are still great Numbers of Christians there, call'd now *Coptes*, under a Patriarch of their own, Residing at Grand Caire. From whom the Emperor of the Abissins receives his Bishop.

(6.) For that great Empire has but one Bishop, like our Plantations in America. But with this Difference, that the Bishop of Abissinia lives among them, and Governs them in Person, whereas the Bishop of our Part of America was never there, but Resides at London. But they hope, and so do we too, that this will be Remedy'd in time, and that Suffragan Bishops will be Granted them, of which I am told the Bishop of London is very desirous, but that it is not in his Power alone. And then that Precedent will be taken from the Dissenters, how well Christians may live without any Bishop among them. But not so well neither, when the State of the Churches in America is Consider'd, and the chief Cause of their Corruption is, that they have no Bishop Resident among them.

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